

Budget Help

Developing your budget is a critical phase of your project if you hope to secure funding from public or private sources. It is also a good way to clarify what you will and will not be doing in your project. For a grant application, your budget should reflect the funding guideline-amounts and show how project money will be spent. Every budget should show both income and expenses and be easy to understand.

This document offers advice for those creating a project budget for grants funding.

- It is advisable to construct two draft versions of your budget one 'bare bones' and one 'pie in the sky'. This helps strike a balance between optimism and pessimism and allows for priorities to be set and flexibility in relation to unsecured-funding. The final budget amount will usually fall somewhere between the two extremes.
- Budgets should be scaled according to the project need and applicant experience and not just for the maximum amount of the award.
- It is useful to show preliminary research about project costs, provide the quotes, and show how you arrived at your figures.
- Being able to document that you have several sources of funding (or even potential funding) will strengthen an application. Funding organizations realize that the money you are applying for may only be a part of the total support you need.
- The purchase or rental of equipment qualifies as a legitimate budget expense if it relates to the
 overall project. However, if the equipment is the single purpose of a request it will not be eligible for
 funding.
- Projects may earn money through ticket sales, admission fees, merchandise, and other points of sale. However, projects must primarily exist to serve the arts in Maine and not have the primary focus of a commercial venture.
- For grants that require a match, in-kind expenses can be used instead of cash. In-kind expenses are goods or services that are donated or volunteered to a project. If someone donates \$350 worth of fabric to your project, you can include 'fabric' as a match as an in-kind donation at \$350. If a professional videographer normally charges \$65/hr for their services but volunteers to shoot for you, they are donating \$65/hr as an in-kind service.
- Please be sure to include artist fees, stipends, honoraria, and other money going to artists in the budget. It is important to compensate collaborators (and yourself) for working on the project.